

## San Francisco Bay Environmental Primer

Outline Summary 8/26/06  
by Ariel Rubissow Okamoto

### **Intro-Overview:**

Bay as centerpiece -- geography is everything. Brief history of natural formation and discovery of Bay, human impacts and major environmental challenges.

### **Beneath the Surface: What is an Estuary?**

What happens under the brown and blue surface of the water? Geography of the bayfloor, fresh and saltwater mixing, tides, rivers, importance of links between watersheds, bay and ocean.

### **Visible & Invisible Life: Fish, Birds & Other Wildlife Communities**

What lives in the Bay? Past, present and future? Former abundance native fish, birds, mammals. Adaptation to changing conditions.

### **Touch & Taste: History of Human Changes to the Bay Environment**

How polluted is the Bay? Can you eat the fish, swim in the water or drink the water? Trace history of different pollutants.

### **Saving the Bay: History of Bay Activism & Development Public Access**

Who are those who have fought to keep the Bay healthy, and those whose mandate it is to protect and enhance its resources? What have we saved and what remains to be saved? Who are those we will look to for environmental leadership in the future as the region grows and changes?

### **Today's Environmental Frontiers : Current Issues, Initiatives & Challenges**

In a national context, Bay region advanced in its scientific research and political commitment to maintaining or restoring enough of Bay ecosystem to sustain fish, wildlife, water quality and recreational uses. Bay community has developed cutting edge goals and tools for restoring wetlands, opening shorelines to public, curbing and managing pollution, preparing for sea level rise and global climate change, sustaining the important links between local creeks and bay and ocean waters. Challenging management frontiers include: battling invasive species; tangling with the legacy pollutants; balancing the sediment budget for wetland restoration, fill and dredging; and inspiring public awareness of, and individual responsibility for, ongoing human impacts on the ecosystem, among others.

### **Special Graphic Sections Within the Book --see *baylandscape.jpg* for mock up**

These seven multi-page sections place the reader in a familiar spot on the bayshore and tell them the story of the landscape through an annotated series of sequential strip photos/ illustrations of different eras or different watershed sections.

#### **Shorelines:**

- 1) Crissy Field (from mission to military base to wetlands, public park, ocean gateway)
- 2) Salt Ponds (from Indian middens to trading piers to salt ponds to tidal wetlands)
- 3) The Maze (from mudflats to garbage dump to transportation corridor to urban park)

#### **Watersheds, from the Headwaters to the Bay:**

- 4) Guadalupe River (history of mercury mining and impacts on watersheds)
- 5) Wildcat/Alameda Creek (history of steelhead, culverting, creek and fishery restoration)
- 6) Napa River (back to the floodplain, reconnecting rivers to the landscape and bay).